



IMBALANCE IN THE STRUCTURE OF TRAINED HUMAN RESOURCES

by Dr. NGUYỄN THUẤN

To develop the human resources is of great importance to the national industrialization. "Vietnam Government and VCP always consider investment in human resources as the most basic, and investment in education is the investment in development" (from the speech made by Đỗ Mười, the VCP Secretary-General, at Hà Nội University of Education on Jan. 19, 1996).

In the last decade, The Government and the Party have made policies to develop education, improve intellectual standard, and foster talent. Public expenditure on education is on the increase, from 4 or 5% in some years before to 10% or 11% in recent years, from VNĐ1,020 billion in the fiscal year 1991-1992, to 4,080 billion in 1994-1995, a fourfold increase in a 3-year period.

Because of the government investment in education, the quality of Vietnam human resources is improved. The literacy rate increased from 85% in 1979 to 88% in 1989 and 90% in 1995. This is a high level in such a country with low per capita income as Vietnam. This percentage is even higher than that of regional richer countries such as Malaysia (its literacy rate in 1995 was 78%), Myanmar (81%), Singapore (83%), etc. Those who got college or university degrees in 1989 amounted to 678,107 persons, or 10.5% of the population, that is, around 10 persons with college or university degrees per 1,000 persons. This number increased to 828,410 in 1995, represented 11.2% of the population, increasing by 22.2% in comparison with 1989.

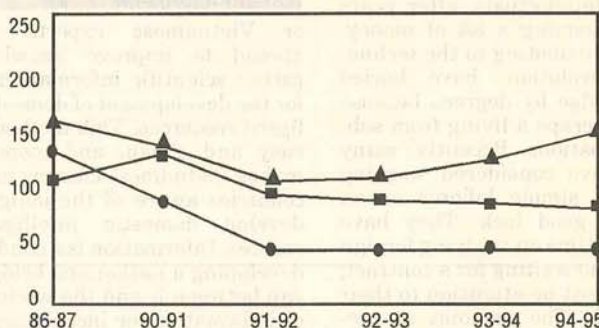
We can see that human resources

have been one of decisive factors in our economic development in recent years. The education service has contributed a lot to the improvement of the quality of human resources, so it's necessary to develop this service with a view to meeting demands posed by the national industrialization.

However, what we want to discuss here is not the size or the quality of human resources but the structure of trained human resources. In our opinion, the education service has produced a disproportionate structure of trained human resources.

Thus during the last ten years, the number of students in universities and colleges has increased faster and faster, from 126,600 in the school year 1986-1987 to 200,300 in 1994-1995, an increase of 60%. Meanwhile, students of vocational high-schools were on the decrease, from 156,000 in 1986-1987 to 108,200 in 1994-1995, a decrease of some 34%. Particularly, students of technical worker training schools decreased remarkably, from 139,700 in 1986-1987 to 69,800 in 1994-1995 with a decrease of over 34%.

● Technical workers ■ Vocational high school ▲ College and University



According to the General Department of Statistics, there were alarming differences in size and growth rate of students in different schools:

In the school year 1994-1995, the number of students of vocational high-schools equalled 160% of students of technical worker training schools. This ratio isn't appropriate

Table 1: Students by schools (1,000)

School	86-87	90-91	91-92	92-93	93-94	94-95
General education	12,482.9	11,882.9	12,371.4	12,806.7	13,568.7	14,587.4
Technical workers	139.7	95.4	63.8	63.2	64.9	69.8
Vocational high school	156.0	135.4	106.5	107.8	119.8	108.2
College and University	126.6	129.6	107.0	136.8	157.1	200.3

to the demand for well-trained workers in present industrialization, or in other words, the structure of trained human resources in Vietnam has an upside down pyramid shape.

In our opinion, causes of this imbalance are:

- Laborers couldn't find work suitable to their skills and employers pay no fee for the training of their employees but a subsistence wage to a laborer with university degree. This leads to a false demand for laborers with university degrees.

- Career guidance service hasn't produced intended effects helping learners find suitable jobs and professions.

- There is a lack of a service network supplying information and prediction of demand for labor.

- A shortage of facilities for study at most colleges and universities has led to development of correspondence courses or distant learning with a view to reducing the cost of training which is even lower than the cost of training for technical workers.

- Help from the Government and education service given to vocational schools and technical worker schools is limited.

This imbalance of the structure of trained human resources has led to a paradox: the unemployment rate among laborers with university degrees is higher than that of technical workers. A survey conducted by Nguyễn Văn Dũa in 1993 produced the following results:

Table 2:

Education of the unemployed in HCMC

Education	Percentage
Technical worker school	0.7
Vocational high school	1.7
College and university	1.2

Of the unemployed in HCM in 1993, 1.2% of them have got university degrees, while only 0.7% of technical workers were jobless after school. This is a waste of time, money and energy for both the Government and the people, not to mention other bad effects on the society.

Thus, in our opinion, a lot of attention must be paid to education and training of the human resource and education development must be a national policy as stated in the Resolution 4 of the 7th term VCP Central Committee. However, the structure of trained human resources must be diversified and be shaped reasonably and proportionately in order to meet the demand of the labor market and reduce waste of time and money for the Government and the society as well ■

THE FIRST STUDENT JOB CENTER BASED ON THE DECREE 72/CP



by Dr. NGUYỄN THUẦN

In the educational reform in which university graduates have to find employment for themselves, the former HCMC University of Economics established the Student Job Center (which was called ESC for short) in 1992 in order to find employment for graduates, supply information about labor market, arrange training courses for students who are looking for jobs and help employers recruit skilled workers.

In the past four years, ESC has found employment for thousand laborers and given training courses or advice to thousands of customers. Particularly, in the first half of 1996, some 1,970 laborers, 1,432 of them are students representing 72.69%, have come to ESC to look for help and 492 of them have found employment. Well-developed relations between ESC and governmental bodies, local and foreign companies have helped to secure a firm position for ESC in the network of job centers in HCMC and surrounding provinces. ESC has become a model which operated well and was approved by the public.

Based on the suggestion made by the College of Economics, the Vietnam National University-HCMC sent the Official Correspondence 34/ĐHQG-HCM on April 8, 1996 requesting the Ministry of Education and Training to approve of the establishment of the Student Job Center according to the Government's Decree 72/CP issued on Oct. 1, 1995. At the same time, after studying market demand and business performance of the Center, the Ministry of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs sent the Official Correspondence 3163/LĐTBXH-VL on Sep. 21, 1996 requesting the Ministry of Education and Training to establish ESC as a "pilot model" of the job center for students. On Oct. 4, 1996, the Minister of Education and Training issued the Decision 4161/GĐ-ĐT approving official establishment the "Student Job Center". This is the first and only student job center which was formed according to the Government's Decree 72/CP in Vietnam.

In my opinion, student job center is a new model originated from the market demand and the educational reform and appropriate to the present labor market in Vietnam. At its first stage of development, it has met the demand for employment of graduates. This is also a useful service connecting education institutions with organizations (both private owned or public-owned ones) employing graduates, connecting contents and quality of training supplied with demand of employers for skilled laborers. ESC has become a center that provides students with the most diversified information about the labor market and training courses to help them choose and find right and suitable employment ■